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TAGS: MARR, VS, US

SUBJECT: APPROACH TO THIEU

FOR THE CHARGE FROM THE ACTING SECRETARY

1. YOU SHOULD SEE THIEU AS SOON AS POSSIBLE TO OBTAIN FROM HIM HIS RATIONALE FOR THE WITHDRAWAL OF HIS FORCES FROM KONTUM AND PLEIKU AND THE DRAWDOWN OF HIS FORCES IN MR-I. YOU SHOULD TELL HIM THAT WE NEED A CLEAR PICTURE FROM HIM AS TO HIS INTENTIONS AND STRATEGY TO DEAL WITH WHAT IS NOW CLEARLY A GENERAL NORTH VIETNAMESE OFFENSIVE.

2. YOU SHOULD POINT OUT TO THIEU THAT CONCERN HAS BEEN EXPRESSED IN WASHINGTON THAT WE HAVE LEARNED OF WHAT OBVIOUSLY ARE MAJOR DECISIONS ON HIS PART ONLY THROUGH THE NEWSPAPERS AND THROUGH INFORMAL CONTACTS AT STAFF LEVELS

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KBH 2/10/00

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PAGE 02 STATE 062480

AS THE IMPACT OF HIS ORDERS BECOME GENERALLY KNOWN. YOU SHOULD STRESS TO HIM THAT WE ARE CONTINUING TO SEEK CONGRESSIONAL APPROVAL OF THE $300 MILLION SUPPLEMENTAL. OUR EFFORTS IN REGARD TO THE $300 MILLION AND FUTURE FUNDING WILL BE IMMENSELY STRENGTHENED IF WE CAN KNOW HIS THINKING FIRST-HAND, SINCE IT WILL MAKE IT POSSIBLE FOR US TO EXPLAIN EVENTS AND THEIR PURPOSE AND SIGNIFICANCE TO THE CONGRESS AND THE AMERICAN PEOPLE. INGERSOLL

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